NEWSLETTER
SUMMER 2010

17TH EDITION

SAFER ROUTES TO SCHOOL

Cambridgeshire County Council

Way2Go!

Catch the Sun (or the rain!)

Now, we are all hoping for a really good summer and the opportunity to get outdoors and catch some sun. But dare I say, "What if it isn't a good summer?" Should we all sit inside, or jump in our cars, wishing we lived in a warmer country? Or should we make the most of the beautiful outdoors by getting out on foot or bicycle whatever the weather?

Believe it or not, Cambridgeshire is one of the driest areas of the UK, but according to Met Office figures there will still be rainfall, on average, 1 in 4 days of the summer. Not to burst any bubbles, but we need to be realistic about our weather! We need to make the most of what we have, and look on the bright side: on average there's 3 in 4 days when it doesn't rain!

I was watching my son the other day, running in and out of the hose as we watered the plants, wondering why, at the first drop of rain, we all think twice about going outside? I think the key is, to quote the scout motto, "to be prepared." Knowing he could get changed when he got inside, getting wet wasn't a problem.

The same applies to our travel, however we decide to travel we need to be prepared for our journey. Whether that be to make sure we have appropriate clothing, food and drink, or that our vehicle is appropriate and well maintained. This issue gives you lots of information on eco- and summer driving, Walk to School and Bike Week events and activities, and much more from the Safer Routes to School and Road Safety Teams.

Who Said?
"I thought of that while riding my bike."

So, however you travel, to school, work, for leisure or on holiday, be prepared so you can enjoy a safe and healthy summer... whatever the weather!

Answer: Albert Einstein

Safer Routes to School News

Schools 'Go! Go! Go!' the sustainable route to school

During the week of 15th – 19th March, primary schools around Cambridgeshire enjoyed a week of theatre workshops with the theme of sustainable transport.

The innovative theatre workshops 'Go! Go! Go!' dealt with the theme of 'school-run' gridlock, and raised awareness of environmental issues and linked to this years' National Science and Engineering Week theme 'The Earth'.

The show began with the global challenge posed by climate change, then moved onto local environmental sustainability, with detailed reference to the area around the school. Finally, the audience were encouraged to consider their own personal transport choices, with particular reference to how their school journey plans affect their well-being.

Six of the County's primary schools who are participating in Cambridgeshire County Councils' Safer Routes to School Project (SRTS) were able to take part in the event. Giving young people an understanding of the issues behind the need for sustainable travel wherever possible helps them to make informed travel choices as they grow up. Increasing numbers of county schools are participating in the SRTS programme and discovering the valuable contribution that the project can make to their school journey issues. These special events organised by the Safer Routes to School team are an excellent opportunity to promote the health and safety of children and concern for the environment. Although many children do already walk or cycle to school, large numbers are still dropped at the school gates because parents are concerned about safety. Establishing Safer Routes and Walking Bus schemes can help, allowing children to get to school

Exciting developments at Godmanchester Primary

Thanks to Safer Routes to School, Godmanchester Primary School recently became the proud new owner of two "Show you care, park elsewhere" signs and some fantastic playground markings.

The signs are to be hung at the front and back entrances of the school where parking is a problem. The playground markings feature a road circuit incorporating local features such as a church, roundabout and bus stop. The markings are an extremely useful tool for the teachers to use with the children to teach them road safety skills and are large enough to be used during playground based cycle training.

Let your fingers walk their way to our web pages!

Have you checked out the Safer Routes to School web pages recently? You can find them at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/saferroutes

The web pages had a major overhaul last year as the team felt they needed to be laid out in a clearer way and content needed updating.

The web pages provide an easy way to access SRTS materials and as they're in electronic form this is much more environmentally friendly too!

More recently a news page has been added so that you can find out what the team have been up to and what is happening at schools participating in SRTS.

The team would love to hear what you think about these pages and if there is anything else you would like to see on them. You can get in touch with us by emailing safer.routes@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

On target to reduce car use in children travelling to school.

You may already be aware that Cambridgeshire County Council is working towards National Indicators. National Indicators are a set of national priorities published by the government. Each Local Authority can pick relevant indicators from the list, and local authorities and their partner organisations like the health services and the police, measure progress towards the priorities by using these national indicators (NIs). Some NIs are statutory targets, such as those relating to education and attainment but local authorities select a further 35 NIs from a list of 198 and these reflect the needs and priorities of the local area.

One of the National indicators Cambridgeshire Council has selected is NI 198 which measures how children travel to school. The aim of the target is to reduce car use on the home to school journey and to increase walking and cycling as an alternative, exactly what SRTS and travel plans aim to achieve.

NI 198 is measured through the annual School Census (PLASC) which is why there has recently been a request for schools to record the way children travel. This means that data can be collected and analysed centrally and enables meaningful comparisons to be made with other authorities.

The great news is that the data shows that we are currently exceeding the targets set.

2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Actual	2008/09 Actual	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Target
24.40%	23.60%	22.14% (Against Target of 23.45%)	21.04% (Against Target of 22.50%)	21.40%

Cambridgeshire County Council runs a number of different initiatives which all help towards the NI 198 target, including helping schools write travel plans, schools participating in Safer Routes to School Projects, taking part in Walk to School Weeks, helping schools set up Walking Buses and running Safer Cycling courses both on and off road.

All of the above contribute to the reduction in car use and our achievement of targets to date.

Who Said?

"When the spirits are low, when the day appears dark, when work becomes monotonous, when hope hardly seems worth having, just mount a bicycle and go out for a spin down the road, without thought on anything but the ride you are taking."

Answer: Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the Sherlock Holmes stories

School Crossing Patrol News

Sylvia Coffin has just celebrated 10 years of working on the crossing at Hartford Infant School Huntingdon starting on 10th March 2000. She has a great relationship with the parents and children and is well respected by the community. She enjoys flat green bowling and is sorely missed when she is not on duty participating in her hobby. This is what she had to say when I asked her to let us know a bit more about it.

"I started bowling about 30 years ago at the firm where I used to work as they had their own bowling green and used to run a yearly competition, bowlers versus non bowlers and once started I was completely hooked.

I now bowl for Huntingdon both indoors during the winter and outdoors during the summer, playing several times a week.

I represent Cambridgeshire playing against other counties such as Norfolk, Suffolk, Northants and Lincolnshire. The team often have to travel some way to participate in these events. This year our team were narrowly beaten at the finals.

The indoor green is open approximately 11 hours a day, 7 days a week, running 6 two hourly sessions a day and they run a coaching session for beginners once or twice a fortnight"

If anyone is interested in getting involved with bowling then they should contact the office and we can give you Sylvia's details who will be happy to introduce you.

Goodbye and Thank you to:

Mechell Orvis, Stukeley Meadows
Barbara Cleminshaw, Ramsey Road St Ives, for Thorndown school

Welcome to:

Rebecca Barton – Fourfields, Yaxley
Angela Winter – Melbourn

Who Said?
"I live on a bicycle... I live in central London, probably 90 percent of my travel is done on a bicycle. I love bicycles."

Answer: Film director Guy Ritchie, former hubby of Madonna, telling Jeremy Clarkson about his fleet of expensive vehicles but admitting he prefers to cycle.

Who Said?
"I relax by taking my bicycle apart and putting it back together again."

Answer: Michelle Pfeiffer

Riding out with the Highways Agency

As we drive away on our holidays, it is likely you will see Highways Agency Traffic Officers (HATOs) vehicles patrolling motorways and trunk roads across England. HATOs work to reduce incident related congestion, improve safety and free up police resources. Nationally they have taken over 76% of all motorway police duties. Most of us won't need their help but if you do, you will be assisted by professional, helpful, highly trained officers. They are present on motorways and other selected trunk roads 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When Road Safety Services were invited to spend a shift with HATOs patrolling the M11/A14/A1M, I jumped at the chance.

I arrived at the HATO office in Whittlesey for the afternoon shift at 2.00pm. As instructed I brought with me steel capped boots and a fluorescent coat with reflective strips – essential safety clothing without which I would not be allowed out. After meeting the shifts' Traffic Officers I was given a safety briefing: don't walk with my back to oncoming traffic, wear my seatbelt at all times, leave vehicle to nearside, a whistle being blown meant I was to immediately jump behind the crash barrier, obey the commands of any Traffic Officer (if the whistle was blown I wouldn't have to be commanded, I'd be over the crash barrier faster than a cheetah). I signed the briefing sheet: "It just means it's not our responsibility if you are killed" said the shift manager cheerily.

I went out with Sierra Lima 13 (SL13) to patrol parts of the A14, M11 and A1M The crew, Ian White and John Williams, welcomed me and were happy to answer all my questions.

Within 20 minutes of leaving Whittlesey we stopped to investigate a car parked with emergency lights flashing on the hard shoulder of the M11. Ian and John went to check if the driver was OK, or the car had broken down and found that the driver was asleep, in the back a baby in a child safety seat. On waking the driver Ian asked if she knew it was only permissible to stop on the hard shoulder in an emergency, stopping to have a sleep was not an emergency. The driver, aware of these rules, was advised how to rejoin the motorway safely and was allowed to go on her way. Details of the incident and her vehicle would be passed to the police. John noticed how taken aback I was by the fact a baby had been in the car. "It's pets and children that cause the most upset [to people], because the decision has been made for them".

The HATOs enjoy a close and effective working relationship with Cambridgeshire police. This was illustrated when SL13 was called to clear debris that had been reported on the A1M. The exact location and lane was unknown. The only way to locate the debris safely was to instigate a rolling roadblock. John positioned SL13 across two lanes and using flashing warning lights, hand signals and an electronic message board on the back of our vehicle, he slowed the traffic down to about 30mph. Ian looked for the debris but could find nothing. A police car at the back of the rolling roadblock contacted SL13 and offered to get ahead of us and remove the debris while Ian and John controlled the traffic. Using their lights and siren to speed through the roadblock, the police overtook us. However, no debris was found except on the hard shoulder so SL13 pulled over to lane one allowing the vehicles to pass. Ian used the message board on the vehicle to thank drivers for their co-operation.

For Ian and John the best part of their job is assisting people. However, as John said "quiet is good, it means everyone is OK and doesn't have a problem." Ian and John were keen to emphasise that the most important thing to do if you have to stop on a motorway is to get away from your vehicle and if you can, wear high visibility or bright clothing. HATOs do a job that although often unseen is very important in ensuring that trunk roads across England run smoothly.

Failure to comply with a Highways Agency Traffic Officer's directions or signs is an offence and could lead to:

- *A fine of up to £1,000*
- *Points on your driving licence.*
- *Disqualification.*

The Traffic Officer vehicle fleet is made up of 207 vehicles

- *There are 7 regional control centres.*
- *There are approximately 1,500 Traffic Officers who patrol 2,025 miles of motorway in England*

(Source Highways agency website http://www.highways.gov.uk)

Road Safety News

Economical & Safely Driven

With fuel costs increasing, driving gets more expensive by the day. How can we save money driving? The answer is actually straightforward:

- Remove roof racks when not needed
- Don't carry unnecessary weight in the boot
- Research has shown that in hot weather closing windows on faster roads and using air conditioning sparingly is more economical than opening the window
- At urban speeds, turn the air con off and open the window.
- Avoid short journeys, walk or cycle instead!

A well maintained car with tyres at the correct pressures will run efficiently: fuel consumption can rise 1% for every 6psi a tyre is under-inflated. Your driving will also help:

- Avoid harsh acceleration and braking
- Change gear to accelerate, not to slow down
- Don't allow the engine to labour or rev hard – it wastes fuel!
- Look ahead and anticipate speed changes well in advance, try to avoid braking until you need to stop
- Reduce your cruising speed by a few miles per hour

These tips will save you around 10% on your fuel costs, save wear and tear on your car and help you to stay safe. Greener driving means less stress and fewer accidents!

New Campaign urges Cyclists to Look over their shoulders

A new campaign reminding cyclists of the importance of being aware of the surrounding traffic by looking over their shoulder has been launched this summer.

Due to both the high number of people already cycling and the improvements being made to cycling facilities, Cambridgeshire is already a safe place to cycle, but more can be done to prevent needless accidents.

The new campaign, featuring posters on buses, started on April 19 and reminds cyclists of the need to look over their shoulders, to check for traffic. This should be done every time before starting off, overtaking or signalling.

In 2008, 40% of cycling accidents could have been avoided, and many cyclists and other road users would not have had to suffer needless pain, grief and suffering.

By asking the question 'What's over your shoulder?' the County Council is encouraging safer cycling throughout Cambridgeshire. Additionally, for those cyclists who need more confidence on the roads, Bikeability training is still available for £5 per hour per person.

Mike Davies, Programme Manager of Cycle Cambridge said: "Cycling need not be a dangerous activity, but being inactive is proven to be life threatening. With warmer weather and rising fuel prices, now is the perfect time for people to get out and about on their bikes. By looking over their shoulder, cyclists know what's behind them and can ride safely and confidently."

If you would like further information about Bikeability or would like to attend a cycle training course, contact Simon Haydn at Simon.Haydn@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or you can register for training at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/bikeability

Pedal Away This Summer!

This time of year is a great time to get out on your bike. Not only is cycling a great form of exercise it is also a wonderful way to view the surrounding area and see things that you might not see from the window of a car. With the summer holidays fast approaching it is also a brilliant and cheap family activity, pack a picnic and you are on your way.

If your bike has been in the shed for a while be sure to make sure that everything is in good working order. Remember, both brakes must be working and tyres must be in good condition: with plenty of tread and pumped up fully. Lights and reflectors should be clean and switched on when necessary. It is important that everyone checks that their bike is in good working order before every journey.

Celebrate National Bike Week 19th-26th June 2010 by organising some fun activities at school, maybe one of the following:

- decorate your bike competition,
- bike to school day,
- slow bike race or a bike obstacle course.

During this week we would also like to encourage you to offer Pedal Power, the off road cycle course for 7-9 year olds. You don't need a trained cycle instructor to deliver this. For more information on cycle training you can contact either Maree Richards or Cheryl Morgan, Cycling Education Officers on 01480 376721 or email road.safetycycling@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Pupils enjoy a pedal power course

Team Green Britain Bike week

CYCLE CAMBRIDGE

Events

12 & 13 June (10am – 6pm)
Bike Fair on Parker's Piece
Cycle scalextric, cycle cinema, free pedal-powered smoothies and free bike goodies

19 to 27 June
Get cycling during Bike Week
Free cycle hire*, free swimming for cyclists at Abbey pool*, free guided bike rides and competitions

19 June (10am – 4pm)
Dust off your Bike,
Meadows Community Centre
Free bicycle repairs, maintenance, workshops and children's activities

20 June (2.30pm)
Ride For Joy 2,
The Fashion Ride returns
A free guided cycle ride around the city centre aimed at, but not exclusively for, women and girls

10 & 11 July
I Bike Cambridge at the Big Weekend, Parker's Piece
A two-day event of fashion, art, audio-visuals and bicycles. I Bike Cambridge brings together professional designers and Cambridge students to showcase their work in an all day interactive carnival of bicycles, brought to you by Cyclodelic and Cycle Cambridge.

7 – 27 June 2010
Cambridge Cycle Challenge
A free, fun competition to encourage people working in Cambridge to rediscover the joys and benefits of riding a bike. Prizes include cinema tickets, shopping vouchers, cycling gear and much more! For more information visit www.cambridgecyclechallenge.org.uk

*Terms and conditions apply. Visit the events pages at www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/cycling or call 01223 699906

Can Your Pupils Detect Cycling Starz?

On the 17th June 2010 many schools will be taking part in Starz Detectives, which on this occasion is following a cycling scenario. A fantastic interactive resource designed to help 9-11 year-olds consider road safety issues for themselves using information and technology.

Working in teams in their classrooms, pupils receive e-mail clues from a central control room manned by Cambridgeshire County Council's Road Safety Team. The response has been huge this year and there will be two sessions giving more schools the opportunity to take part.

Look out for the next Starz Detectives Dark Nights on the 20th October 2010, for more information email elearning@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

More Pupils to Improve Their Bike-Ability

Building on the success of Bikeability in Cambridge, which started in September 2009 as part of the Cycle Cambridge project, the Road Safety Education Team, in conjunction with the School Sports Partnerships, is offering Bikeability to schools across the county where Safer Cycling is not taking place.

This fantastic opportunity to increase the number of pupils who can receive cycle training across Cambridgeshire has been made possible by grants through Cycling England and the Youth Sports Trust for schools where no cycle training is currently offered to pupils.

Over the next three terms (to Easter 2011) nearly 1000 pupils in Years 5, 6 or 7 will be offered Bikeability cycle training in East Cambridgeshire, Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire. This training will be delivered by external training providers who have been selected by the Road Safety Team and/or the School Sports Partnership in each area.

Road Safety Officer Matt Staton said: "We are very pleased to be able to supplement our extensive cycle training programme across the county with this Bikeability training.

"We are proud of the school staff and volunteers who make it possible to train so many pupils across the county in basic safe cycling skills through our Safer Cycling Scheme, but there are some schools where this is not possible for a number of reasons.

"These Bikeability grants have given us the opportunity to ensure as many children as possible have the opportunity to take part in on-road cycle training and also to review our own delivery to make sure both our instructors and pupils receive the best possible training."

For more information on Bikeability please visit www.bikeability.org.uk or contact Matt Staton on 01480 376716 or email matt.staton@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

For more information on Safer Cycling please contact Cheryl Morgan or Maree Richards on 01480 376721 or email road.safetycycling@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Do You "Move On Up" to Secondary School in September?

In September eleven year olds will be heading to their new secondary school and may face a longer walk or bike ride, using different roads. Some may have to use a school bus, taxi or train. It is important that children plan for this important step. Cambridgeshire County Council's Road Safety Team are sending each Year 6 pupil in the county the new "Move on Up" magazine which features stories, quotes, quizzes and stacks of relevant information to help children with the move.

What do children need to know?

• The Green Cross Code is a good start: armed with this, children will feel more confident about crossing roads, including unfamiliar ones.

• If children are going to cycle to secondary school their bikes should be roadworthy and they need to have a properly fitted helmet. Most Primary schools across the county run Safer Cycling or Bikeability courses which will enable children to gain the skills to make safe journeys.

• Where there are dangers or hazards in the locality, such as particularly busy stretches of road, complicated junctions or dangerous bends and hills, they need to know the safest route; this may not always be the quickest.

• Children need to understand that using their eyes and ears all the time is essential to being safe near traffic: they should avoid distractions such as chatting to friends, using mobiles or listening to MP3 players when crossing roads.

• That the more easily they can be seen by traffic, the more likely they are to avoid collisions.

For more information please contact Lyn Hesse, Road Safety Officer on 01480 376718 or email lyn.hesse@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

Activity Book for Out of School Care

This book has been designed to be fun for children and provide a range of adaptable play activities suitable for all age groups attending Out of School Care services.

Using the road is one of the most complicated and dangerous experiences for young people. Children are particularly vulnerable, whether they are walking, playing or cycling. Learning to use the roads safely is an important life skill. Out of School Care can provide road safety education that is fun and supports the work that is done in schools.

The activities in the book can be used individually to promote road safety during

one session, or they can be used as a topic over a longer period.

If you would like an out of school activity book, please contact Lyn Hesse, Road Safety Officer, on 01480 376718 or email lyn.hesse@cambridgeshire.gov.uk.

To submit articles or for more information please contact:

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